

POLICY TITLE	EVALUATING CONSTRUCTION ACTIVITIES - HIGHWAYS AND BRIDGES	NO. 15-09-01
<u>Legislative Authority</u>		
the Ontario Water Resources Act, Section 15 the Environmental Protection Act, Sections 2, 5 the Environmental Assessment Act, Section 5		
<u>Statement of Principles</u>		
<p>This policy addresses water resource concerns related to the construction of highways and bridges and is for use in the environmental impact assessment process by proponents and Ministry of the Environment (MOE) staff. The intent is to provide assistance both in anticipating potential impacts and in planning adequate mitigative measures.</p> <p>Detailed information on these Guidelines is contained in the handbook, "Evaluating Construction Activities Impacting on Water Resources: Part II: Guidelines for Construction of Highways and Bridges, 1983".</p>		
1. <u>Objective</u>	The objective of this policy is to ensure that good construction practices for highways and bridges are used to minimize sediment input into watercourses, and that the physical and biological integrity of Ontario's waterbodies are protected in accordance with Policy 15-01 of this Manual.	
March 1, 1984		
<u>Point of Contact</u>	Director, Water Resources Branch	
<u>Effective Date</u>	March 1, 1984	

2. Application

This policy applies to all highway and bridge projects in Ontario. Most of these projects are carried out by the public sector and are subject to the Environmental Assessment Act.

Under the Act, proponents are required to prepare an environmental assessment (EA) for review by concerned agencies prior to a decision by the Minister of the Environment regarding approval. These Guidelines shall be used by MOE staff in their review of EAs submitted as part of the EA procedure, and by proponents for evaluating water resources impacts and planning mitigative measures.

3. Effects of Highway and Bridge Construction

Short- and long-term effects of highway and bridge construction on the aquatic environment may involve erosion and sedimentation, degradation of ground and surface water quality, disruption of ground and surface water quantity, damage to watercourse bed and banks, channel modification, and an increase in surface runoff. These effects may have negative impacts on the watercourse ecosystem and on other beneficial uses.

4. Mitigation of Construction-Related Impacts

Recommendations to mitigate and minimize potential short- and long-term impacts are outlined in the Guidelines. Short-term, construction-related impacts generally can be minimized through sound construction practices and various site-specific control methods. Long-term impacts can be minimized through a combination of careful project design and site restoration measures.

5. Water Resource Requirements in Environmental Assessment Reports

The following water resource requirements shall be considered by proponents and reviewers during the preparation and review of EA reports:

- (a) baseline data on the pre-construction conditions as they pertain to the quality and quantity of surface and ground water;

- (b) a description of the proposed undertaking and identification of potential impacts;
- (c) an estimation of impact magnitude;
- (d) a strategy for the implementation of mitigative measures;
- (e) a rehabilitation plan for the site and/or route;
- (f) a monitoring program for evaluating the effectiveness of construction-related mitigative measures and the rehabilitation plan; and
- (g) summary statements on the abovementioned water resource requirements which are substantiated by valid references and/or data, with verifiable results of all analyses.

6. Policy Implementation

This policy will be implemented by:

- (a) the Environmental Assessment Branch and the Environmental Approvals and Land Use Planning Branch of MOE during the review and preparation of EAs; and
- (b) the regional offices of MOE during field inspection and EA review.